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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an overview of recent developments in the science of linguistics, and considers their relevance to the teaching of Spanish in Puerto Rico. First, three significant trends are explained and summarized: (1) structuralism, which emphasizes phonetics, pattern, and distribution, and rejects meaning as a tool of analysis; (2) transformationalism, which assumes the existence of two general linguistic levels, "deep" and "surface," and (3) the study of language acquisition, which attempts to understand the process whereby children achieve fluent control of their native language. Following this broad overview, research findings which have applied linguistics research to Spanish instruction are summarized. Data is described showing that the pervasive loyalty toward Castilian Spanish should be reoriented to develop acceptance of language variations such as regionalism, dialectism, and students' idiolects. Additionally, findings are outlined which suggest that a descriptive attitude and a comprehensive view toward language should take precedence over the prescriptive attitude toward language teaching. Words, it is argued, should be learned in context, by association, and should be functional. Various principles are outlined to support the assertion that Spanish grammar instruction should have a strong theoretical foundation. Finally, among other prescriptions and considerations, teachers are encouraged to develop their own personal philosophy of language teaching. (KH)

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LINGUISTICS AND THE TEACHING OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE IN PUERTO RICO

by

Sonia I. Davila

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LINGUISTICS AND THE TEACHING OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE IN PUERTO RICO

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New Trends in Linguistics

A brief review of research done in the area of the linguistic sciences is always helpful when we attempt to discuss language teaching. New linguistic trends and findings in the area of language teaching will be analyzed in this paper from the perspective of its application to the teaching of Spanish in Puerto Rico. One must qualify "new trends". As linguistics is a relatively new science, the so-called new trends refer to the knowledge gathered about how language is structured, generated and used. It is not merely a question of traditional grammar but of descriptive, structural and generative linguistics.

Linguistics is conceived as a science and a body of knowledge acquired by applying scientific methods to the phenomena of language (Hughes, 1963). The impersonal scientific methods of language analysis were developed in the United States during the early part of the twentieth century (Hodges and Rudorf, 1972). Although historical linguistics, called philology, continues to exist, it has been overshadowed in importance by descriptive linguistics. New principles, methods, explanations and procedures have developed.

The science of language is actually composed of such branches as historical and comparative linguistics, grammatical theory, neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropological linguistics, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, computational linguistics and stylistics. Some of those branches relevant to the teaching of Spanish language and grammar to native speakers of Spanish in Puerto Rico are defined as follows:

Psycholinguistics. It studies the relationship between human language and the brain processes which govern language as communication. It tries to find evidence for the reality of the grammatical theory proposed by transformationalists. It questions the origin of language, whether it is innate, or whether it is a learned activity. Is language uniquely restricted to the human being? Cases in which the language mechanisms of the speakers have been damaged by injury or disease are studied (Orr Dingwall, 1971).

Sociolinguistics. It is an area of linguistic specialization that studies the language of people in a world. It tries to determine the reciprocal influence between the idiolect and the culture. For Labov (1969), for example, the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior (Beechhold and Behling, 1972).

Stylistics. Is the application of the principles of linguistics to literary language. Literature is seen not simply as creativity, but rather as creativity that employs language in an innovative form (Orr Dingwall, 1971).

Neurolinguistics. It studies the physiological correlates of abnormal behavior produced by known neurological deficits which can provide insights into bases of normal behavior (Orr Dingwall, 1971).

Applied linguistics. It is the application of the principles and theory of linguistics to other areas of knowledge such as work with computers, the programming of texts, speech and hearing therapy, and mathematical linguistics (Orr Dingwall, 1971).

It is very difficult to generate a complete or absolute definition of language. Every linguist defines the term with emphasis upon his or her area of interest. For example, Chomsky (1957, p. 13) defines language as "a set of finite or infinite sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements." Considering the difficulty of this task, Beechhold and Behling (1970) decided to try to identify two main properties that distinguish language from the language analogy in non-human species. They claim that these properties are: (a) human language has a bilateral structure that is syntactical and phonological, and (b) it is open-ended.

Traditional or Prescriptive Grammar

In order to understand the new trends in linguistics, it is necessary to recall the main components of the so-called traditional grammar. This was based upon the model of Latin which was considered a universal model. The traditional grammar was prescriptive. Any linguistic change was considered degenerative. People should talk and write according to rules established by grammarians. Language academies, for example, the Real Academia Española, were considered the "Supreme Court" of Language. The purism attitude stated that this institution *"limpia, pule y da esplendor"* (cleans, polishes and gives splendor to the language). The traditional grammar relied upon definitions which were sometimes based upon semantics and other times upon function. This led to confusion.

The Structural Period

Structuralists try to describe language as used by native speakers and to show its structure. They study language from three different levels that will be discussed later: phonology, morphology and syntax.

In 1921, Edward Sapir published *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. Bloomfield published several articles which serve as the basis for his book *Language*. Both linguists contributed to the renewal of the descriptive linguistic foundation (Mounin, 1972).

Ferdinand de Saussure is called the father of modern descriptive linguistics. He set up a structural approach to the study of language and is considered the precursor of phonology. Saussure pointed out a distinction between language *(lengua)* and speech *(habla)*. Speech is an individual realization that varies according to the speaker; language is the system (Mounin, 1972).

Saussure also makes a distinction between synchronic and diachronic linguistics. The first studies the language in a particular place or time, while the latter studies the evaluation of a language during successive periods of time. For Saussure, the symbol is the end result of the significance *(significado)* and the significant *(significante)*. The "significance" is the concept while the "significant" is the structure (Mounin, 1972).

Edward Sapir introduced the phoneme theory of the Prague School to America. For him, linguistic forms should be studied as a system. Linguistics is the study of forms and the making of abstractions based

upon their functions. Each language has a strange inclination to develop certain grammatical structures and every language has an internal phonetic system conceived with a predetermination. Language is a cultural rather than a biological heritage. Bloomfield provided a conceptual unity to the field of linguistics (Beechhold and Behling, 1972).

During the structural period when statistical methods to obtain inventories of the sound elements of a language were adopted, it was possible to compare the qualities of the sound system of the language with the actual linguistic behavior of speakers in different situations. It is sustained that all native speakers of a language use a common sound system. On the other hand, the individual pronunciation may vary in a fairly wide range of dialects. The structuralists consider the sounds of actual speech as manifestations of an abstract, idealized unit that every speaker knows. The bundles of sounds, concrete and abstract, are called phonemes. The phoneme itself carries no meaning, but the presence or absence of a given phoneme affects meaning (Beechhold and Behling, 1971).

Furthermore, structuralists separate words into components with meanings. A morpheme is defined as a unit of language that conveys meaning and that cannot be subdivided. Free and bound morphemes combine to produce complex morphemes. Free morphemes combine to form compound morphemes. Morphology is defined as the study of linguistic forms and parallels in structural theory. Phonology is described as the study of sounds (Hughes, 1963).

Structuralists emphasize the sound system. Grammar, including syntax, is described as a determination of classes of morphemes and selectional and combinational rules. Referential classes—nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs—are described as large and open. They are continuously entering into language. The functional and structural classes classified as small and closed are: articles, prepositions and conjunctions. The allophones are variants of phonemes and the allomorphs are variants of the morpheme. A new linguistic branch emerged, named morphophonemics, which is the interface of morphology and phonology.

Bloomfield attempted to eliminate meaning as a tool of analysis. He intended to develop rigorous analytical methods, or discovery procedures, that would produce a description of language without the resource of meaning. For him, meaning was not capable of objective verification. His theory of immediate constituents is the main founda-

tion for American syntax (Mounin, 1972).

With the development of structural linguistics in the United States, a change occurred in the teaching of grammar. Charles Carpenter Fries, for example, published *The Structure of English*. Fries rejected the traditional parts of speech and the authority of written language. He focused on pattern and distribution, not on specific words and their meanings, and gave some attention to immediate constituent analysis. His work is based on four form clases—nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and fifteen groups of function words (Beechhold and Behling, 1972).

As we have seen, the sentence is considered to be the largest unit of language that allows scientific analysis. Language is conceived as speech and as a system of arbitrary vocal sounds. Orthography is based upon the principle that a phoneme can be represented by one letter grapheme.

Transformational Grammar

Chomsky, with his monograph *Syntactic Structures* (1957), traced a new direction in contemporary linguistic study. The underlying meaning is interpreted as an integral part of linguistic analysis. The structural analysis of sentences is not enough to explain the features of linguistic behavior. Ambiguity and surface similarity cannot be explained by structural description (Chastain, 1971).

Language is not synonymous with speech. It is an underlying form that can be expressed through speech and through writing. For the structuralist, language is speech and writing is a representantion of speech (Reed, 1965). The underlying meaning is an integral part of linguistic analysis.

Beechhold and Behling (1972) stated that grammar is seen as an operational process rather that static or object oriented. These operations consist of transformations of deep structures (from an abstract and deep semantic level) into surface structures (at the phonological or speech level).

Transformational methodology makes structural descriptions of the deep and the surface structures. The concept of competence is used to identify a deep grammar phenomenon. Performance is the surface manifestation of speech (Chastain, 1971).

Grammar is not a single block of rules, but a series of components whose integration and interaction provide the complexity and diver-

sity of language. The assumption is made that the semantic identity predicts an underlying structural identity. Complex sentences are composed of simpler sentences. These do not necessarily appear unchanged on the higher level, but may undergo various permutations and deformations.

For Chomsky (Chastain, 1971), the knowledge of a language involves the ability to assign deep and surface structures to a group of sentences which are infinite in number. It requires the act or relating these structures and the designation of a semantic and phonetic interpretation to the deep and the surface structure.

To sum up, transformationalists assume the existence of two general linguistic levels. The deep (abstract) underlying structures derived from a base of phrase structures and lexical components to produce meaningful kernel sentences and the surface derived structures, the actual sentences we speak, which are transformed grammatically and are rendered into sound.

Other Contemporary Viewpoints

Wilkinson (1971) stated that, recently, linguists have begun to question the rigid separation of grammar levels: the syntactic component, the phonological component and the semantic component. Generative transformational grammar has split into two theoretical camps:

1. The Extended Standard Theorists — These insist in the separation of levels or components. They propose surface rules of semantic interpretation to handle phenomena that may seem to require a mixing of levels.

2. Generative Semantics — It advocates that the deep structure must contain all the information necessary to the meaning of the sentence and that the syntactic and the semantic structure are one and the same. A deep structure tree is understood to contain all the information relevant to meaning.

Language Acquisition

Great interest has emerged in trying to explain the process of language acquisition. This is the process whereby children achieve

fluent control of their native language. Campbell and Wales (1972) consider that the knowledge of language acquisition has not been greatly advanced through the recent results of empirical work. In their judgement, there is a need for making a methodological distinction between competence and performance. They think that the ability to produce and understand utterances appropriate to the context has been omitted. Context is defined as the situational and verbal environment of utterances.

There are two basic theories of language learning. Skinner holds that language learning is habit formation. Lenneberg and Chomsky consider language to be an innate species-specific biologically determined behavior. Carrol stated that there is nothing exclusive in the theories of Skinner and Lenneberg and Chomsky. Rather, their theories are complementary. This opinion is reflected in the eclectic approach to methodology in language teaching (Chastain, 1971).

Leopold (1949) and others studied, described and recorded children's utterances and the context in which they were made, as well as the meanings of the constituent words. Because there were no clear ideas about syntax, they tended to terminate their studies at the third year of the child's life. The principle focus of more recent research has been the period from the beginning of syntactically structured speech at the third year (Beechhold and Behling, 1972).

Bloom et al. (1979) data results demonstrated the general fact of slow but steady developmental progress of children toward the acquisition of complex sentences. The sequence in which the different meaning relations emerged was consistent among the children and these were expressed in complex sentences. However, there were variations among them in the sequence in which they acquire different connectives to encode their meanings. The variations in the age of emergence (of connectives and meaning relations) that were observed is consistent with most of the child language literature that has contributed to the consensus that age alone is a poor predictor of acquisition. Bloom (1980) also studied the longitudinal emergence of verb inflections (ing, s, -ed/irregular) in the spontaneous speech of four American English-speaking children. The results of the study indicate that these inflections in children's speech emerged at the same time, but were distributed selectively with different populations of verbs. The study provides indirect evidence about the rules that children learn for verb inflectional morphology.

In this same vein, Menn (1981) reported that context plays a very

important part in a child's understanding of a sound and, therefore, the strategies used to deal with it depend on the child's interpretation of the context of the structure.

Implications from the Research in Linguistics as it is Applied to Teaching Spanish to Spanish Speakers in Puerto Rico

Linguists tell teachers the way language works. Sociologists tend to describe the cultural and social influences on language. New ideas concerning the learning process have been obtained from psychologists and neurologists. Research work concerning children's language acquisition has been encouraged. Now, more than ever, Puerto Rican educators face a challenge concerning the teaching of language (Mellado, 1954; Porraz Cruz, 1964; del Rosario, 1965). As far as the teaching of Spanish in Puerto Rico goes, the main point in this paper is that, in spite of knowledge of theories, dissemination of new theoretial and pedagogical ideas, efforts in curriculum design and a great investment of the public treasure in books and materials, the implementation of teacher training programs will succeed only if:

1. linguists and educators come in contact with each other and a sense of mutual respect and admiration exists among them.
2. secondary curriculum is more oriented toward linguistics than towards literature.
3. the affective domain of teachers, including their values, self-esteem, feelings and attitudes towards discipline and children are taken into consideration in teachers' preparation programs.
4. traditional grammar is less emphasized by teachers and new trends, approaches and methodologies are applied creatively to the teaching of language.
5. language art college teachers and reading specialists are highly qualified and are intrinsically committed to education.

Puerto Rican educators should be as competent in linguistics as in educational concerns. In this manner, they could serve as intermediaries in bringing to language teachers those linguistic discoveries that might be helpful in improving the language skills of children.

Sociolinguistic Perspectives and Attitudes Toward Linguistics

"We agree that there are language elements common to all Spa-

nish speakers and that allow for communication between groups from different regions... all of which are legitimate dialects and all of which have a large core of common linguistic elements without saying that Castilian Spanish is better than Puerto Rican Spanish" (La Fontaine et al., 1973).

"Little is known about the specific environmental factors that make it possible for language acquisition to occur, but the primary ingredient would appear to be merely sufficient exposure to language use in a social context" (Langacker, 1973).

The above two quotations show that the main influence of linguistics on language teaching in Puerto Rico must be in terms of attitude. The sense of loyalty toward the Castilian Spanish language should be reoriented in order to develop acceptance toward language variations such as regionalism, dialectism and students' idiolects. A more scientific attitude toward language must be developed. Based on Saussure's distinction between language as a system and speech, del Rosario (1965) states that language is what is said (*lengua es lo que se dice*). He believes in a non-Castilian attitude toward language. The author emphasized regional semantic variations of words in his book *Vocabulario puertorriqueño* (1965). Examples of semantic variations in different regions in Puerto Rico are included, such as: *olla*, and *quererse*; some examples of verbs with different meanings from the general ones are: *administrar* and *caculear*. The book collected Puerto Ricans' original words that deserve a place in the students' language acquisition. The trends in current sociolinguistics emphasize that every speaker of a language speaks one or more dialects. There is no dialect-free speech or writing (Beechhold, Behling, 1972). It is this dialect that gives its speakers a sense of identity or belonging. Every individual has also his or her own distinctive way of speaking an idiolect.

According to these ideas, it is recommended that the language series *Habla y lengua puertorriqueña* be used (Arrigoitia, Camille and Gallego, 1974). The three books represent the application of the structural approach to the study of Puerto Rico language at the junior high school. The authors stated:

> We have called the text *Habla y lengua puertorriqueña* because the spoken word is the individual expression of the speaker while language represents the total image of a system of expression as conceived by a whole people. We wish you would cultivate your own

> personal means of expression, which would undoubtedly be that of Puerto Rico, as well as that of its authors, because each one of us Puerto Ricans is both spoken word and language, as long as we represent, by means of the original strength of the spoken word, the thinking and the feeling of this land. (Translated from the Spanish by the editors).

Models can be selected from literature for different dialects and regionalism in America, Spain and the Caribbean area. Newspapers, films, tape recordings and popular songs are valuable resources in class. Books and materials based on new linguistic trends are needed at this level. Oral composition or presentations must also be emphasized. The students must recognize different styles or levels of discourse: intimate, casual, consultative, formal and frozen (Rivers et al., 1976).

The important issues concerning the linguistic interference between Spanish and English in Puerto Rico, Spanglish and language mixture, must be analyzed in high school classes within cultural and historical contexts. Opposite positions, such as Nash's (1977), del Rosario's (1976), and Granda's (1972), should be discussed.

Competence and Performance

"The linguistic competence that the child brings to school becomes the basis for elaboration and modification of further language learning through instruction." (Menjuk, 1969).

"According to the generative-transformational view, the comprehension of how language and mind interact is possible while determining the role of language in the process of converting thought to expression. Competence should be understood before explaining performance." (Chastain, 1971).

The foregoing quotations set the stage for the discussion of competence and performance as they relate to the Puerto Rican setting. A descriptive attitude and a comprehensive view toward language should take precedence over the prescriptive attitude toward language teaching. As a result of spontaneous communication among students, product of the self-discovery method, and of the child-centered curriculum, the teacher may obtain realistic samples of the children's utterances. The analysis of the children's oral and written language, combined with new linguistic theoretical foundations will provide the rationale for the design of a linguistic-oriented curriculum. Furthermore, these ideas are particularly useful for the new approaches

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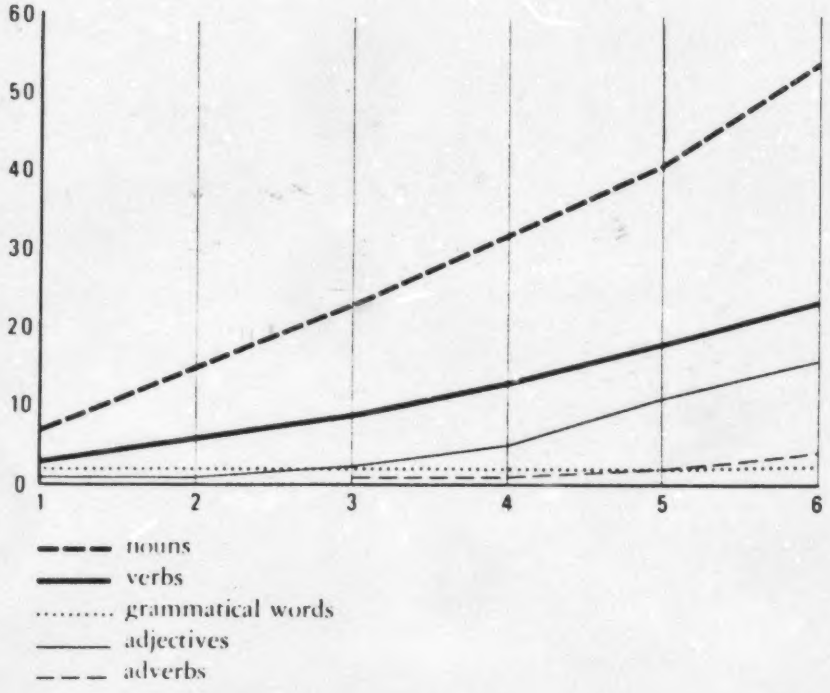
related to reading in the content areas. The difficulties of reading materials for different subjects can be determined by predictive or measurement analysis. The readability formulas, for example, determine the material's level of difficulty, based on linguistic variables within a passage (Estes and Vaughan, 1978).

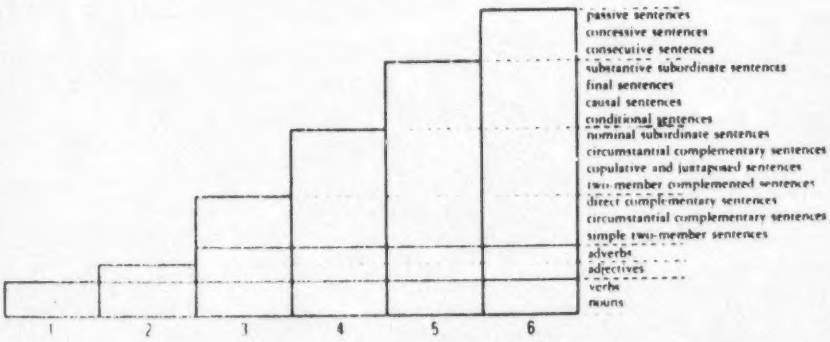
López (1979) refers to the psycholinguistic studies of Echevarría, Morales Walter and Villamil. These studies concern the child's understanding of the Spanish syntax. According to them, children need specific instruction in subordinate and passive sentence learning.

López Morales (1979) proposed a program of language arts activities based on lexical frequency and student's interests. He also points out the necessity of considering the criteria of the category distribution of the common standard language: nouns (54%), verbs (23%), adjectives (15%), adverbs (4.2%) and functional or structural words (2.4%). The active and passive vocabulary of the child should be attended to as early as kindergarten. Parts of speech should be distributed by grade levels at the elementary school as seen below (Graph 1, López Morales, 1979).



He also suggests a grade level gradation for sentence structures as seen below (Graph 2, López Morales, 1979).

El trabajo directo e intenso de los alumnos con estructuras oraciones comienza a partir del tercer grado, pero antes han adquirido la noción de las categorías gramaticales básicas. En nuestra programación se van acumulando materiales. Nunca se sustituyen unos por otros —como suelen hacer otras series —, sino se van agregando a los que ya conoce el estudiante. El siguiente gráfico puede explicar claramente la cuestión:*



Al margen de estos dos elementos, existen, otros, siempre subordinados a aquéllos, que también son parte de las tareas de conseguir los objetivos propuestos. Adiestramiento en las técnicas de expresión oral y escrita, la lectura, y en las técnicas de producción lingüística, la expresión oral y la escritura.**

Even though this sequence is relevant, it will not be useful unless significant experiences or approaches are provided in the learning situation. Hence, as outlined by López, traditional grammar cannot be successfully mixed with structural design. If language competence is a requirement that precedes performance, then teachers should provide for basic foundations which make performance possible. Once the student has acquired a basic competence, it should be activated by

* Pupils begin direct and intense work with sentence structures at the third grade level, but before then they have acquired the notion of basic grammatical categories. In our programming, materials keep accumulating. Never is one substituted for another as is the case with other series; rather, they are added on to those the student has already learned. The following graph can show clearly the matter in question. (Translated from the Spanish by the editors).

** Other elements exist, besides these two, which, while still subordinated to these, are part of the task of reaching the proposed objectives: training in the techniques of written and oral expression, reading, and in the techniques of linguistic production, oral expression and writing. (Translated from the Spanish by the editors).

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means of activities based on structural grammar.

Meaning and Vocabulary

"The sense of recognition and prediction comes from meaning bearing patterns, not vocabulary. This sense is evident in every sentence" (Smith, Goodman and Meredith, 1970).

The above quotation is supported by del Rosario (1972) when he states that vocabulary is the least characteristic of the three components of language. One of the functions of the semantic component is to account for the relationships that exist among sets of linguistic forms. Vocabulary cannot be learned in isolation or by lists of words. Words should be learned in context, by association and should be functional. This thesis is supported by most developmental readers for children which teach new words in context rather than in isolation.

The Teaching of Grammar

"The semantic and syntactic systems of a language comprise the principles that relate conceptual and surface structures" (Langacker, 1973).

The teaching of Spanish grammar in Puerto Rico should have a strong theoretical foundation, as supported by the above quotation. It should be based on the syntactic criteria, complemented by the morphological and semantic aspects of language. It should take into consideration various principles:

1. There is a dualism in language. The sign or symbol comprises the internal content and the external level. The internal aspect consists of the concept or meanings and of the relationships among words and their grammatical accidents. The external level is composed of phonemes and suprasegmentals such as stress, pitch, and terminal juncture (Dalbor, 1980).

2. Language is a system; it is a network of relationships. Language is a "system of systems": phonological, morphological, syntactical and lexical (Barranechea, 1963, as quoted by López, 1979).

3. There should be a unity of criteria for systematization.

In order to understand and organize language elements in a system, it is necessary to deal with the criteria one at a time: syntax,

morphology and semantics. A more complete analysis may include the phonological and orthographic analysis which are part of the external language aspect (Langacker, 1973).

1. Syntactical approach— Syntax may be defined as the principles of arrangement of the constructions formed by the process of derivation and inflection (words) into larger constructions of various kinds (Gleason, 1961). The process of analyzing syntax consists of: the analysis of immediate constituents and immediate constructions; a description of relationships between immediate constituents, and the description of relationships which are not efficiently described in relation to their immediate constituents (Gleason, 1961, p. 133). In other words, the approach consists of the analysis of the sentence structure, word functions, connection constructions and agreement. Emphasis is placed on the separation of sentences, and on the identification of subject and predicate, its nucleus and its modifiers.

The application of this approach to the teaching of the Spanish language to the Puerto Rican school population is limited by the fact that there is a lack of linguistic information about the Puerto Ricans' written language development beyond the pre-school years (Paviolo, 1979). An increase in the number of sentence adverbials, compound predicates, structure words and adjectivals parallel an increase in grade levels (Paviolo, p. 118).

2. Morphological approach— Gleason (1961, p. 53) stated that the fixed order of morphemes in certain constructions, and their degrees of freedom, are basic to language. They are expressions of the systematic structure which is the real essence of speech. Word variations like number, gender, mode, time, person, grade, and case are studied. The morpheme classes, such as roots and affixes, and the inflectional and derivational morphemes are particularly used as structure clues in reading.

3. Semantic approach— By their meaning, words can be classified as connotative and non-connotative. Langacker (1973) defines the semantic system of language not only as the study of meanings, but also as the way in which these meanings divide the conceptual experiences into categories.

4. Spanish language teaching will focus on actual language: it should be a synchronic approach. Diachronics can be studied at college levels.

5. Phonetics and phonology— This knowledge will provide the

teacher with the tools needed to discriminate and describe the speech sounds with scientific precision. Del Rosario (1972) precisely describes the Puerto Rican phonemic system; the Spanish American phonemic system has been compared with the Spanish of Spain (Dalbor, 1980; del Rosario, 1979). This knowledge must be used while teaching listening and oral skills, as well as reading and writing. Miscues and misspelling will be understood scientifically.

Phonics and phonetics are fundamental aspects of the encoding and decoding processes. For a scientific approach to the study of language, these must be considered, due to their relevance while dealing with oral and silent reading, with literature analysis or appreciation, and with instrumental and creative writing.

Some considerations must be noted regarding procedures. Language structures must be studied in a systematic way and decisions as to content sequence and scope should be made. The point of departure of the syntactical approach should be from the shorter units of speech to the longer units; short sentences, clauses and phrase combination should be studied, only then should the morphological approach be applied.

Various alternatives can be implemented in order to study syntax. The following "Formalism" should be applied:

1. Immediate constituent analysis— It illustrates the relationships of one word to another in the sentence. It does not provide information on the roles played by the various constituents within the sentence.

2. Tagmemics— An utterance is seen as a string of "slots" or functional substitution points at which vertical substitutions may be made without altering the structure. When words are substituted, there will be a different meaning but not a different sentence structure. Words are seen as slots where a substitution is possible; what fills the slot must be a word of the same class as the word already in the slot. A slot of this sort is called a tagmeme, thus the name "tagmemics." The sentence is a series of tagmemes or a "hypertagmeme." The tagmeme is a substitution point along with the word class found at the points. A particular sequence of tagmemes, or a particular type of sentence, is a "frame". This procedure is the opposite of the traditional classification which is based on meaning (Beechhold and Behlin, 1970).

3. Tree structures— They are associated with transformational

grammar. A sentence is set down as a tree structure if it allows the telling of things about the syntactic organization of the language.

The point of departure of the syntactical approach should be from the shorter units of speech to the longer units.

Methods and Final Considerations

Spanish teachers should develop their own personal philosophy of language teaching. A philosophy that revolves around the reciprocity of oracy and literacy skills implies that there will be a total communication program and not merely a few language lessons (Van Allen, 1971). Instead of looking only for the magic key of a method, teachers should express their creativity while dealing with different approaches; they must know different techniques and procedures. It must be concluded that neither the generative-transformational theory, nor the cognitive viewpoints deal with pedagogy as a main area of concern. It is the educator, the teacher, who may wisely apply these principles to the learning process and consider their implications.

In the case of language teaching in Puerto Rico, experience has demonstrated that contemporary results of the incidental approach to grammar have been worse than the ones from traditional grammar (Spanish Commission, C.E.E.B.). In 1969, del Rosario promoted a language teaching reformation, based on a scientific knowledge of the Puerto Rican pronunciation and the knowledge of the Puerto Rican vocabulary unique to the Puerto Rican culture. He also encouraged the enrichment of the students' technical and scientific vocabulary and a modern approach toward morphosyntactical and orthographical aspects. In 1967, the Spanish Commission of the Puerto Rican Office College Entrance Examination Board recommended the revision of the language program for the public schools, taking into consideration the new trends in linguistics. In 1972, the personnel of the Spanish Curriculum Center stated that different approaches should be considered for the teaching of Spanish:

> No limitaremos nuestra visión a un solo enfoque; una actitud inteligente y balanceada exige la búsqueda e integración de varios enfoques que brinden el mejor provecho en bien del aprendizaje cabal de una gramática basada en las necesidades y realidades lin-

güísticas del español en Puerto Rico.*

Even so, the accomplishment of this goal is still waiting for new directions. There is also a need for more empirical research. Lado (1968, as quoted by Titone, 1979) stated that the need for a multiple scientific support arises from the very nature of language learning which has its structural and dynamic complexity and can be adequately studied only by several converging disciplines. Consideration must be given to different approaches based on the sciences specially dealing with communication, such as linguistics, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics.

The application of technology to the language teaching process will bring significant changes in such areas as utilization of space in the school, allocation of time for each individual, measurement of progress and achievement, design and use of materials and the relation of learners to the learning process. Tapes of various kinds can be used: those that only require listening, or others requiring motor or verbal responses from the learner. The Language Master can also be used for this purpose.

Materials should be used as a means of acquiring behavioral goals already stated in a curriculum so designed as to meet the needs of the Puerto Rican students: for example, learning units of various kinds, programmed lessons and/or language laboratories. The *Spanish Curriculum Guide* (1972) is a valuable attempt in the establishment of a competency-based language program. *The ABC's of Puerto Rico* (del Rosario, 1968) is an example of how linguistics, literature and pedagogy can be combined for effective learning. In all probability, if criteria for the evaluation of materials have been established, quality will be assured.

* We will not focus our vision on just one approach; an intelligent and well balanced attitude demands the quest after and the integration of various approaches capable of producing the best results in the complete learning of a grammar which is based on the linguistic needs and realities of Spanish in Puerto Rico. (Traducido del español por las editoras).

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